

A Systemic Approach for Improving Performance Results of Special Education and Early Intervention Services

May 27, 2004



*Office of Special Education
and Early Intervention Services*

DESIGN FOR RESULTS®

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DESIGN for RESULTS[®] :

A Systemic Approach for Improving Performance Results of Special Education Programs and Services

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DESIGN for RESULTS®:

A Systemic Approach for Improving Performance Results of Special Education Programs and Services

Introduction

The Michigan Department of Education is actively committed to improving early intervention and special education services in pursuit of realizing the 11 performance results presented on the next page. These results were recommended to the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE/EIS) by a broadly based steering committee as part of the U.S. Department of Education's Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (CIMP). Assisted by The Great Lakes Area Regional Resource Center (GLARRC), the OSE/EIS initially engaged two Design for Results® (DfR®) Teams of diverse stakeholders to address compliance-related areas of concern in Birth-to-Five services and General Supervision during the 2000-2001 school year. Improvement plans in these two areas were submitted to the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and moved into implementation during the summer of 2002. By spring 2003, two additional DfR Teams recommended systemic actions that the OSE/EIS could take to advance toward results in School Age and Secondary Transition services. The OSE/EIS is embarking on implementation of the recommended designs for improved performance results in the spirit of continuous improvement. This document captures current designs and does not necessarily reflect enhancements that may evolve during implementation. Participants in each DFR team represented diverse organizational and experiential perspectives and the ethnic and geographic diversity of Michigan.

Design for Results®

The product of over two decades of grounded research in complex systems design, Design for Results is a systems-based application of interactive management. To achieve successful use with stakeholders in field situations, Design for Results has incorporated well-documented findings in behavioral requirements of productive group interaction, processing of complex ideas, theories of organizational culture, transforming leadership processes, and organizational learning. The science of disciplined inquiry is balanced with creative design tools during each of the four phases of the process.

- **Discovery:** All design work must be framed in a specific environmental and organizational context. The OSE/EIS and GLARRC staffs work continually to understand the design context, task, stakeholders, organizational structures, and processes.
- **Diagnosis:** Shared understanding of the design situation (e.g., the system of barriers, root causes, etc.) is critical to crafting meaningful solution paths. Each DfR Team engages in specific framing or reframing of the problem(s) situation in preparation for design.
- **Design:** Based on their diagnosis of the design situation, the DfR Teams create and recommend a situation preferred to the current one.
- **Implementation:** Guided by the DfR Teams' strategic direction setting, the OSE/EIS and partners embark on the systemic extension of action plans of design into reality.

The OSE/EIS Performance Results

(Identified by the CIMP Steering Committee)

Birth-to-Five

- All children with special needs, birth to five, meaningfully participate in school and life.
- Family, school, and community support the continuous growth and development of children with special needs.
- The educational and community systems are flexible and accept all children at their developmental levels by providing effective supports and services.

School Age

- Students with disabilities have supportive, caring, positive relationships and meaningful community involvement.
- Students with disabilities reach challenging educational standards.
- Students with disabilities, families, and educators have the knowledge and skills needed for productive next steps.

Secondary Transition

- Young adults with disabilities participate in community life.
- Young adults with disabilities have the knowledge and skills to be self-determined.
- Young adults with disabilities have employment, further education, or other meaningful activities.
- Young adults with disabilities are lifelong learners.

General Supervision

The MDE, the OSE/EIS assures a collaborative, effective, statewide system for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities and/or developmental delays (birth to 26), and their families, resulting in timely access to appropriate resources and services that ensure Early Intervention Services in the Natural Environment (EIS in the NE) and free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment (FAPE in the LRE).

Birth-to-Five Overview

Performance Results (Identified by the CIMP Steering Committee)

- All children with special needs, birth to five, meaningfully participate in school and life.
- Family, school, and community support the continuous growth and development of children with special needs.
- The educational and community systems are flexible and accept all children at their developmental levels by providing effective supports and services.

OSEP Areas of Concern (Determined through self-assessment and OSEP validation)

- Review the concern about sufficient numbers of service coordinators and the ability of families to identify their service coordinators. Address the local review process and appropriateness of evaluations within the natural environment cluster of the Self-Assessment.
- Work on barriers to information, referrals, and services as noted in the Comprehensive Public Awareness and Child Find System cluster of the Self-Assessment.
- Address the consistency and timeliness of Transition Plans and options for children not eligible for Part B at age three within the Early Childhood Transition cluster of the Self-Assessment.
- Establish an *Early On*® System Review (EOSR) link to the first component within the General Supervision cluster of the Self-Assessment, and set a cycle with a specified number of reviews per year.

Design Inquiry

- *Early Intervention Services in the Natural Environment DfR Team.* Diagnose root causes and recommend strategic directives for a coordinated system of Early Intervention Services (including personnel and service coordination) in the Natural Environment.
- *Child Find DfR Team.* Diagnose root causes and recommend strategic directives for a comprehensive, coordinated Child Find system (including urban/rural Child Find issues, awareness of physicians and hospitals regarding referral to *Early On*®, and appropriate and timely evaluations).
- *Transition Planning–The OSE/EIS Advised by State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC).* Address consistency and timeliness of Part C – Part B transition planning.
- *Monitoring Model–The OSE/EIS Advised by SICC.* Develop a monitoring model that reflects the relationships between compliance and improved quality outcomes for infants, toddlers, and their families.

Birth-to-Five DfR Team

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Joan Blough	Eveline Hunt	Mark Reigle
Barb Bowman	Mark Larson	Shirley Rose
Chris Cali	Kathy Manta	Lance Schuhmacher
Kristi Carambula	Dotty McDougal	Mary Scoblic
Jan Cheeney	Janeen Mills	Vanessa Winborne
Anne Dallaire	Tamara Nelson	

Note: The Birth-to-Five action plan including activities and timelines is available on the web at: www.michigan.gov/documents/CIMPDecember2002_76601_7.pdf.

Birth-to-Five: Early Intervention Services in the Natural Environment

Diagnosis of Root Causes

During spring 2002, a DfR Team diagnosed root causes that inhibit a coordinated system of Early Intervention Services (including personnel and service coordination) in the Natural Environment (EIS in the NE). Three causal paths emerged: a) funding, regulatory, and policy causes; b) training and technical assistance causes; and c) evaluation and system review causes (see Figure 1). Causal factors that “drive” or most significantly influence the system of factors are depicted at the deepest levels of each path (Level III for Paths A & B; Level II for Path C).

Design for Improvement

The DfR Team recommended strategic directives to:

1. Identify and remove barriers to flexible funding systemwide to fully support provision of services in the natural environment.
2. Develop a strong preservice/in-service system for professionals and families.
3. Develop a systems review process that is data driven including identification of community assets and development.

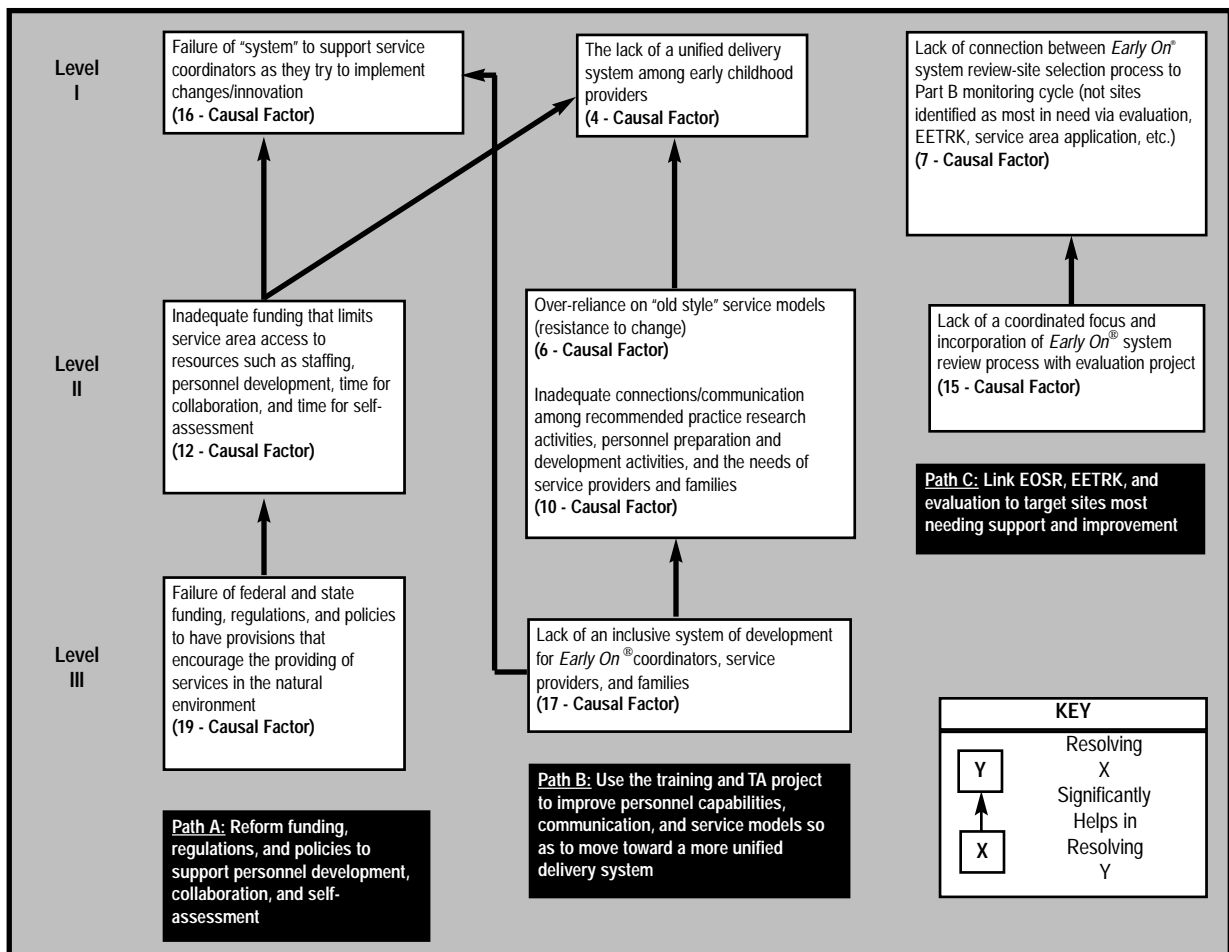


Figure 1. Root Cause Analysis of Factors That Inhibit a Coordinated System of Early Intervention Services in the Natural Environment.

Birth-to-Five: Comprehensive Public Awareness and Child Find System

Diagnosis of Root Causes

During spring 2002, a DfR Team diagnosed root causes that inhibit a comprehensive, coordinated public awareness and Child Find System (see Figure 2). Specific concerns the team examined included urban/rural Child Find issues, awareness of physicians and hospitals regarding *Early On*®, and appropriate and timely evaluations. The team identified three causal paths: a) the need for systems change through improved collaboration, increased funding, and shared training and technical assistance (T&TA) (the gray boxes including causal factors 82, 7, 38, 36, 14, 29, 30, 44, and 53); b) the need for increasing public awareness (the dotted boxes including causal factors 82, 84, 27, 1, 13, 70, 53 and 83); and c) the need for improved data (the black boxes including causal factors 82, 84, 6, 12, 61, and 81).

Design for Improvement

The DfR Team proposed strategic directives in five areas:

1. Promote systems change through improved collaboration, increased funding, and shared training and technical assistance (T&TA).
2. Improve data system.
3. Increase public awareness.
4. Identify and address factors that contribute to persistence of systemic boundaries.
5. Institute fiscal reform including pooling of funds at the state and local levels.

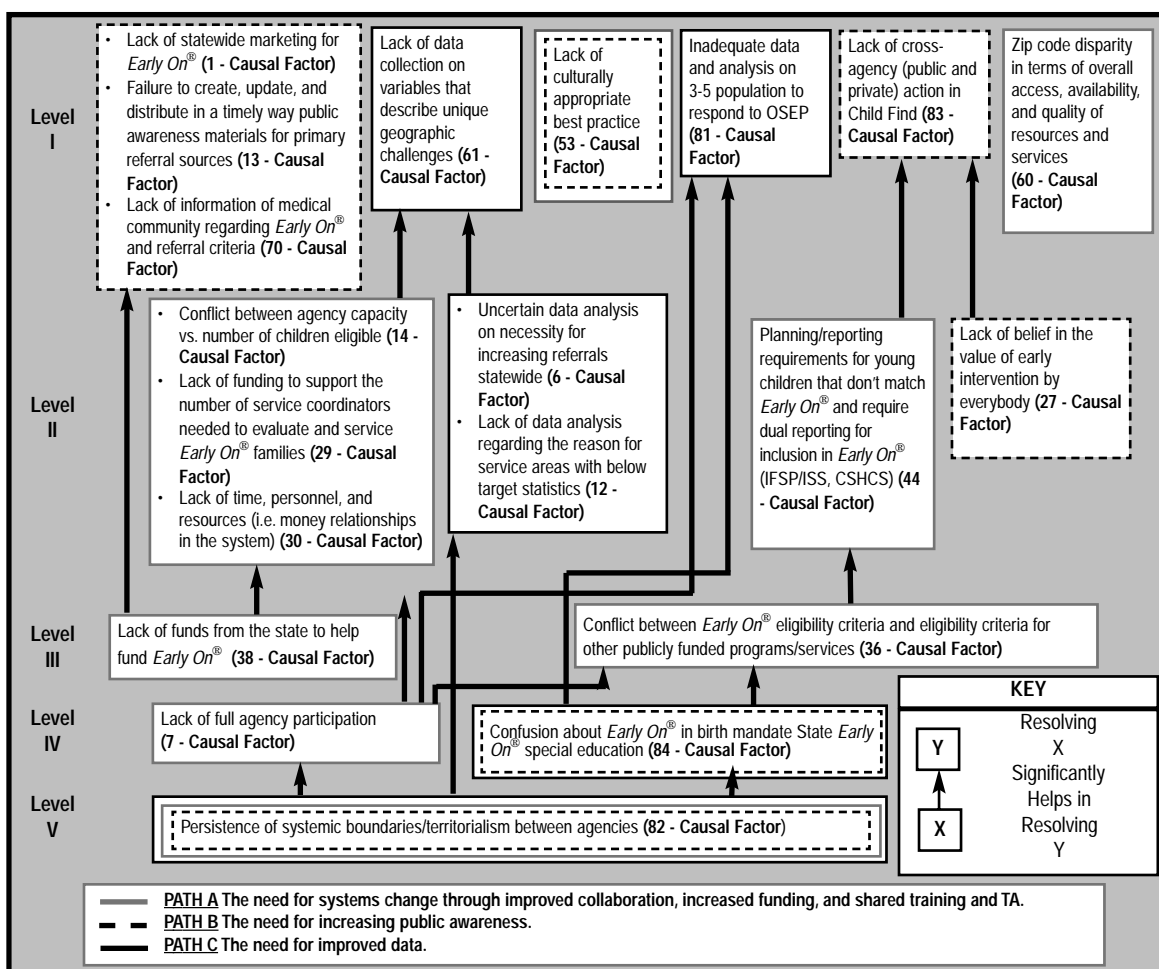


Figure 2. Root Cause Analysis of Factors That Inhibit a Comprehensive, Coordinated Child Find System.

Birth-to-Five: Part C to Part B Transition Planning

Given the current status and more technical nature of transition planning and the Part C monitoring model, it was determined that these areas of concern could be addressed by the OSE/EIS. The Birth-to-Five steering committee members reviewed and revised these proposals. CIMP steering committee time and resources were invested as DfR Teams in the more complex inquiry around the systems of Early Intervention Services in the Natural Environment and Child Find.

Diagnosis of Root Causes

Based on the Self-Assessment, the OSE/EIS identified the lack of standards for Part C to Part B transition planning as problematic and related to problems with: 1) often incomplete and untimely transition plans and 2) inappropriate transition planning for children leaving Part C who are not eligible for Part B (see Figure 3).

Design for Improvement

Two strategic directives were advanced:

1. Develop and implement standards for Part C to Part B transition for use by Part C and Part B monitors (see Figure 3).
2. Provide training on standards.

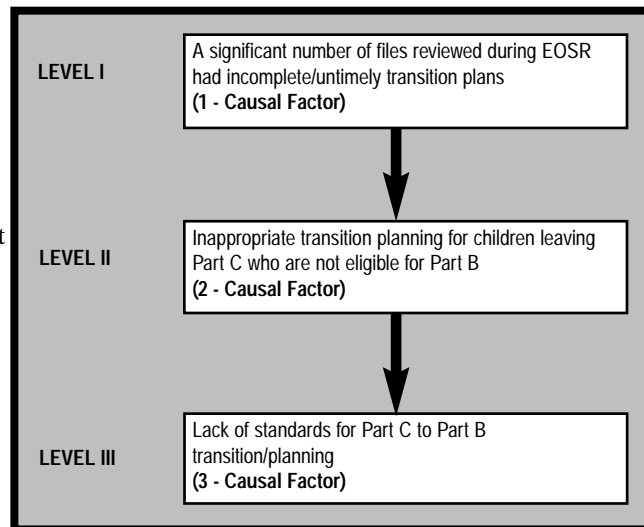


Figure 3. Analysis of Factors That Inhibit Consistent and Timely Part C - Part B Transition Planning.

Birth-to-Five: Part C Monitoring Model

Diagnosis of Root Causes

The OSE/EIS worked with a subcommittee of the State Interagency Coordinating Council to address the area of concern regarding monitoring of Part C. The concern was to establish an *Early On*® System Review (EOSR) link to the first component within the General Supervision cluster of the Self-Assessment and set a cycle with a specified number of reviews per year. Particularly problematic were: 1) the insufficient number of monitors to conduct site visits and 2) the lack of a tool or mechanism for annual review of locals (see Figure 4).

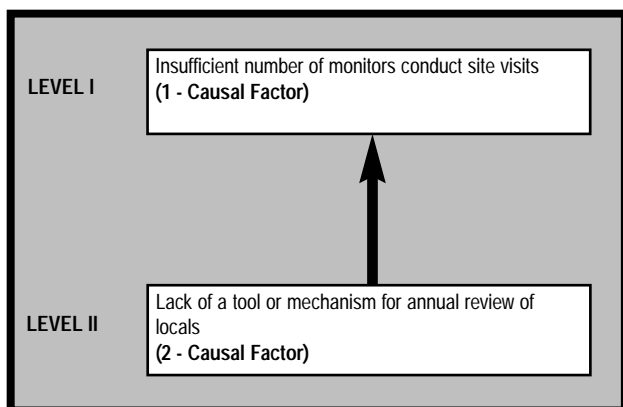


Figure 4. Analysis of Factors That Inhibit a Monitoring Model That Reflects the Relationships Between Compliance and Improved Quality Outcomes for Infants, Toddlers, Children, Youth, and Their Families.

Design for Improvement

Two strategic directives were proposed:

1. Contract with the training and technical assistance project to hire monitors to increase the number of sites reviewed.
2. Develop a local site visit self-assessment tool that can be used on an annual basis.

Birth-to-Five Improvement Plan Framework

The Birth-to-Five DfR Team recommended systems changes related to policy, funding, data, personnel development, public awareness, and local self-assessment (see Table 1). The policy and funding recommendations (listed in the first column of Table 1) are at the core of a commitment that Michigan Governor Jennifer M. Granholm has made to develop a comprehensive early childhood system. Numerous efforts to garner funding sources and other support for implementation of a comprehensive early childhood system are currently underway. For example, the Michigan Department of Community Health recently applied for an Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Meanwhile, the State Interagency Coordinating Council and *Early On*[®] grantees are implementing strategic directives that were recommended to:

- Collect, analyze, and disseminate data statewide for system improvement.
- Strengthen and coordinate personnel development to uniformly achieve state quality standards.
- Engage the public and partners in increased public awareness.
- Build and improve local capacity through self-assessment.

Table 1
Birth-to-Five Improvement Plan Framework

SYSTEM REFORM THROUGH POLICY & FUNDING	COLLECT, ANALYZE, & DISSEMINATE DATA STATEWIDE FOR SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT	STRENGTHEN & COORDINATE PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT TO UNIFORMLY ACHIEVE STATE QUALITY STANDARDS	PUBLIC AWARENESS: ENGAGE THE PUBLIC & OUR PARTNERS	BUILD & IMPROVE LOCAL CAPACITY THROUGH SELF-ASSESSMENT
Identify specific funding/policy/regulation changes needed to provide adequate funding for service coordination (3 - Strategic Directive)	Build state and local level <i>Early On</i> [®] capacity to use data for planning and system improvement (14 - Strategic Directive)	Develop the preservice and inservice training curriculum for <i>Early On</i> [®] personnel and families to address the competencies (1 - Strategic Directive)	Identify and provide diverse tools for evaluations (28 - Strategic Directive)	Develop a local self-assessment tool that can be used on an annual basis (SICC subcommittee) (30 - Strategic Directive)
Establish state level funding as match (at or equal to) for federal <i>Early On</i> [®] funding (6 - Strategic Directive)	Base sustained learning activities on research results relative to effectiveness of Early Intervention Services in the Natural Environment (16 - Strategic Directive)	Develop a strong preservice/inservice system for professionals and families (5 - Strategic Directive)	Update eligibility determination process and procedures (34 - Strategic Directive)	Create service area self-assessment process that addresses community assets/development (15 - Strategic Directive)
Adopt funding and service provision policies and guidelines across agencies that support Early Intervention Services in the Natural Environment (8 - Strategic Directive)	Identify <i>Early On</i> [®] personnel across state (14 - Strategic Directive)	Support the development of preservice/inservice (based on curriculum of each involved discipline) and family programs that address the philosophy of prevention and early intervention, leading to increased Child Find activities (22 - Strategic Directive)	Inform all primary referral sources of their responsibility to complete Child Find activities (18 - Strategic Directive)	Coordinate EOSR and evaluation project data for development of a continuous improvement plan in each local service area (10 - Strategic Directive)
Identify and remove barriers to flexible funding system wide to fully support provision of Early Intervention Services in the Natural Environment (13 - Strategic Directive)	Look at service coordination models (at local, state, and national levels) to determine how to best provide service coordination (7 - Strategic Directive)	Conduct personnel development needs assessment of <i>Early On</i> [®] personnel (12 - Strategic Directive)	Develop culturally competent Child Find practices and materials (24 - Strategic Directive)	Identify and address factors that contribute to the persistence of systemic boundaries (23 - Strategic Directive)
Institute fiscal reform including pooling of funds at the state and local levels (25 - Strategic Directive)	Develop work load recommendations (based upon delivery models) for service coordinators (2 - Strategic Directive)	Identify and promote successful models for conducting appropriate evaluations (20 - Strategic Directive)	Establish mechanisms to work with locals to improve performance (i.e., clear partner expectations regarding Child Find areas of concern) (21 - Strategic Directive)	
Analyze true cost of providing early intervention services and funding source(s) (4 - Strategic Directive)	Contract with T & TA Project to hire monitors to increase the number of sites reviewed (29 - Strategic Directive)	Conduct technical assistance to inform/train evaluators (32 - Strategic Directive)		
Look at service coordination models (at local, state, and national levels) to determine how to best provide service coordination (7 - Strategic Directive)	Develop a system review process that is data driven including identification of community assets and development (9 - Strategic Directive)	Develop and implement standards for Part C to Part B transition for use by Part C and Part B monitors (26 - Strategic Directive)		
	Conduct data analysis with service areas with low target statistics (19 - Strategic Directive)	Provide training on standards for Part C and Part B transition (27 - Strategic Directive)		
	Build upon database as to reason evaluations don't make 45 day timeline (31 - Strategic Directive)			
	Collect data from those families who don't complete the <i>Early On</i> [®] process (to best shape the system) (33 - Strategic Directive)			
	Analyze true cost of providing early intervention services and funding source(s) (4 - Strategic Directive)			

School Age

Overview

Performance Results (Identified by the CIMP Steering Committee)

- Students with disabilities have supportive, caring, positive relationships and meaningful community involvement.
- Students with disabilities reach challenging educational standards.
- Students with disabilities, families, and educators have the knowledge and skills needed for productive next steps.

Design Inquiry (Through discovery and priority-setting by the Core Planning Team, the following School Age result was targeted for design.)

Challenging Educational Standards DfR Team. Diagnose barriers and recommend strategic directives for facilitating local building guideposts that will enable students with disabilities to reach challenging educational standards. The definition of “challenging educational standards” is:

1. To have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity for a high quality education.
2. To receive effective instruction and services, informed by assessments aligned with the general curriculum.
3. To demonstrate achievement on the Michigan Curriculum Framework content standards and benchmarks.

School Age DfR Team

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School Age: Barriers to Reaching Challenging Educational Standards

Diagnosis of Barriers

During winter 2002, the School Age DfR Team diagnosed barriers that inhibit students with disabilities from reaching challenging educational standards. Clearly, the most influential design implications center around what happens to build the capacity of personnel, both before they begin practicing and once they are providing services. As reflected by Level IV of the influence map (see Figure 5), the driving barriers are two pronged:

- Personnel preparation – The failure to provide adequate preparation to teacher candidates in all areas – the knowledge and skills related to students with disabilities (Barrier 38).
- Personnel development and leadership – The lack of quality, meaningful personnel development for everyone (Barrier 41) and the lack of quality administrative leadership to support teachers and students (Barrier 87).

Inadequate capacity-building of personnel leverages other pathways of barriers. For example, limitations exist in the awareness, alignment, instructional diversification, accommodation, and progress assessment of the curriculum for students with disabilities (Barriers 13, 4, 53, 10, and 35). These issues are compounded by inadequate coordination between special and general education (Barrier 25), poor collaboration with families (Barrier 45), low expectations (Barrier 94), and inappropriate goal setting (Barrier 49).

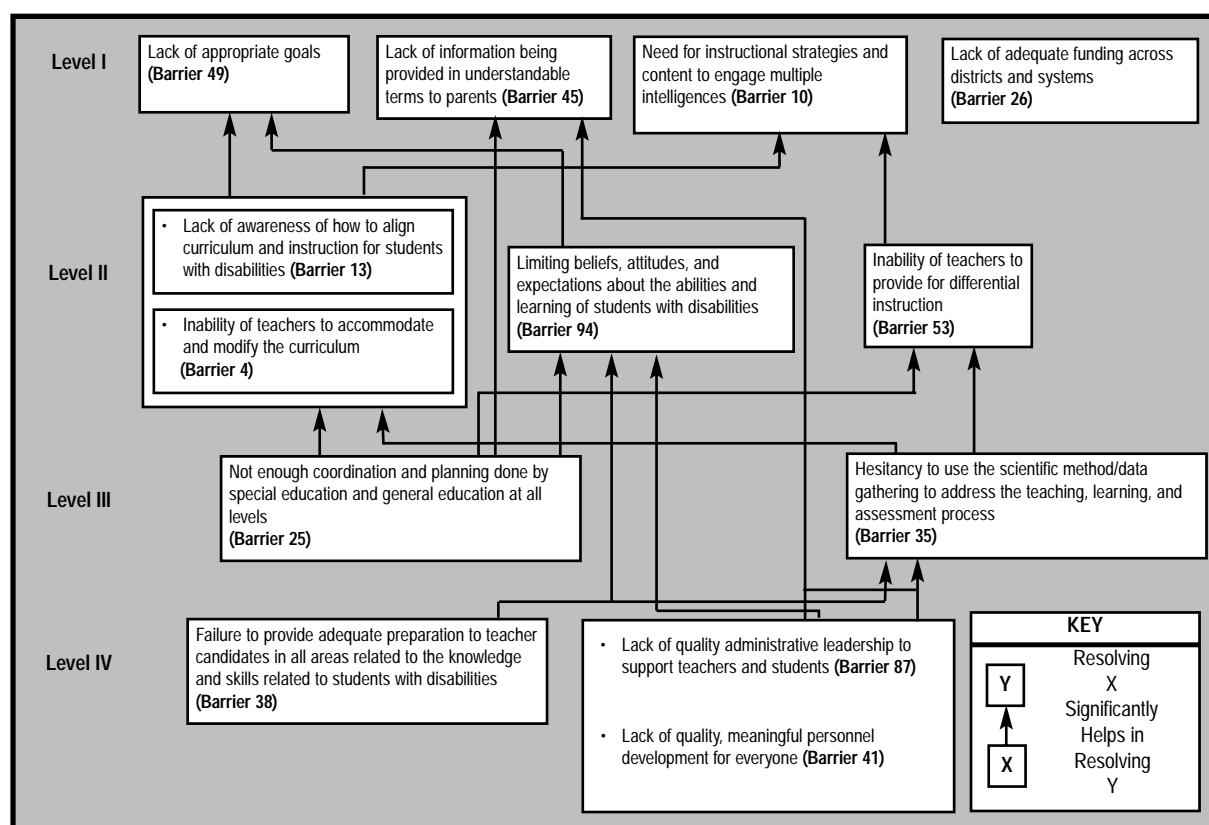


Figure 5. Influence Map of Barriers for Children With Disabilities in Reaching Challenging Educational Standards.

School Age: Local Building Guideposts

Reaching and maintaining high levels of student achievement are the gold standard for school improvement. Local building guideposts are intended as a set of blueprints for building the achievement potential of the district to meet rigorous content standards (see Table 2). Local building guideposts recognize and are sensitive to the fact that each individual district and building are at different phases in their own developmental trajectories for meeting state (e.g., *Education YES!*) and national (e.g., *No Child Left Behind Act*) standards. While individual districts and buildings may choose to focus on particular facets of systems improvement, the DfR Team recognized that successful implementation of changes in input, process, or outcome goals requires an articulation among at least five systems that interact in any school organization.

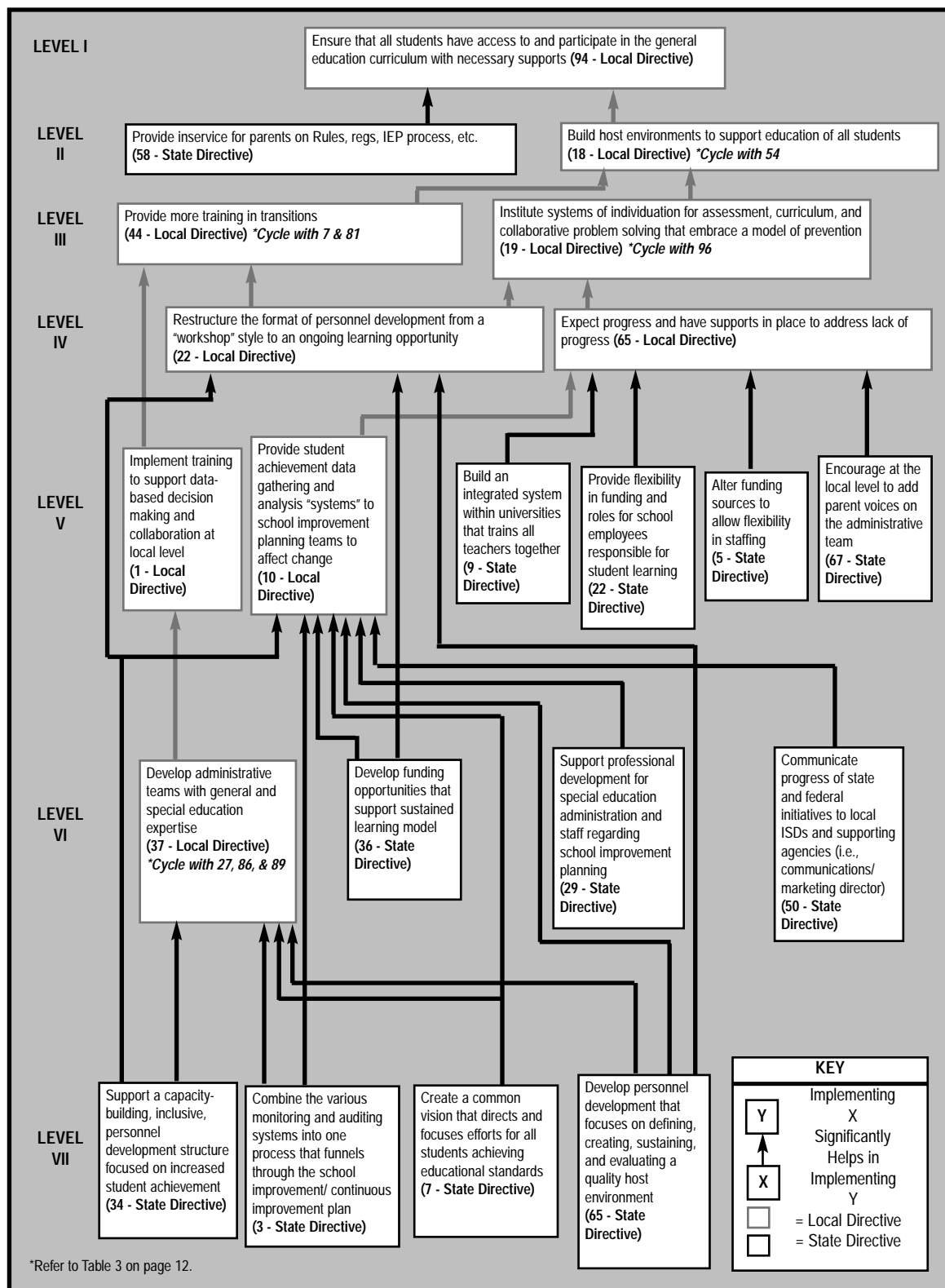
1. **Alignment of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction:** All students must have access to and participate in the general education curriculum with the necessary supports. All educators expect and enable progress through instructional and assessment strategies. (Cluster 1)
2. **Effective Personnel Development:** Comprehensive and sustained personnel development should be designed to meet the needs of all students. It should be based on universal researched practices that promote student achievement and successful transitions. (Cluster 2)
3. **Improvement Through Monitoring and Compliance:** Systems are in place for school improvement teams to collect, analyze, and use student achievement data. Formative and summative evaluations per grade level and schoolwide are used. (Cluster 3 and Strategic Directive 86)
4. **Host Environment/Learning Culture:** A “host environment” is the learning community that supports the success of all students as well as integrated teams of general and special educators. All students benefit from systems of individuation of the curriculum, assessment, and instruction. The spirit of individualizing and collaborative problem solving embraces a model of prevention rather than failure. (Cluster 4)
5. **Meaningful Collaboration:** Administrative teams with general and special education expertise provide a continuum of leadership. Effective school improvement planning is promoted. Multiple community groups and agencies utilize extended resources to unify systems for all students. (Cluster 5)

Table 2

Local Building Guideposts for Enabling Students With Disabilities to Reach Challenging Educational Standards

Cluster 1: CURRICULUM/ ASSESSMENT/ INSTRUCTION	Cluster 2: PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT	Cluster 3: MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE	Cluster 4: ENVIRONMENT/ CULTURE	Cluster 5: COLLABORATION
<p>Expect progress and have supports in place to address lack of progress (65 - Local Directive)</p> <p>Assist educators with the use of assessment to improve instruction (81 - Local Directive)</p> <p>Support development and use of formative and summative evaluation system for grade level and whole school (86 - Local Directive)</p> <p>Ensure that all students have access to and participate in the general education curriculum with necessary supports (94 - Local Directive)</p>	<p>Provide more training in transitions (44 - Local Directive)</p> <p>Develop (data-driven) universal researched practices that impact all student achievement providing support for sustainability (27 - Local Directive)</p> <p>Restructure the format of personnel development from a “workshop” style to an ongoing learning opportunity (22 - Local Directive)</p> <p>Implement training to support data-based decision making and collaboration at the local level (1 - Local Directive)</p> <p>Promote comprehensive, sustained personnel development designed to meet the academic and behavioral needs of students (96 - Local Directive)</p>	<p>Provide student achievement data gathering and analysis systems to school improvement teams to affect change (10 - Local Directive)</p>	<p>Build host environments to support education of all students (18 - Local Directive)</p> <p>Support integrated teams for staff and student assistance in each school building (7 - Local Directive)</p> <p>Institute systems of individuation for assessment, curriculum, and collaborative problem solving that embrace a model of prevention (i.e., early intervention, scientifically-based instruction) (19 - Local Directive)</p>	<p>Develop administrative teams with general and special education expertise (37 - Local Directive)</p> <p>Promote effective school improvement planning (89 - Local Directive)</p> <p>Create opportunity for multiple community groups and agencies to utilize greater resources to unify systems of support for all students (54 - Local Directive)</p>

School Age: Superposition of Influence of State Strategic Directives in Facilitating Local Building Guideposts



Superposition

Figure 6. Superposition Map of State Strategic Directives Influence on Local Strategic Directives That Enable Students With Disabilities to Reach Challenging Educational Standards.

The School Age DfR Team invested considerable exploration of the most influential local building guideposts (local actions or conditions) that enable students with disabilities to reach challenging educational standards. The influence relationships of local building guideposts are represented by the gray boxes and arrows in Figure 6. Locally, what appears most leveraged or influential is a cycle of four mutually enhancing strategic directives (see Table 3):

- Administrative teams with general and special education expertise (Local Directive 37).
- Effective improvement planning (Local Directive 89).
- Data-driven, universal researched practices that impact all student achievement providing support for sustainability (Local Directive 27).
- Formative and summative evaluation system for grade level and whole school (Local Directive 86).

Pathways of related local actions that can be taken include data gathering, analysis, and data-based decision making; restructuring personnel development; and reculturing the educational environment.

What is it that the state can do to facilitate implementation of these local building guideposts?

The School Age DfR Team prioritized 12 possible state actions as particularly important. Through structured dialogue, the team superimposed the influence that these preliminary state strategic directives would have on successful implementation of local change (as depicted in Figure 6). The black boxes represent the state strategic directives, and the black arrows show their influence on local building guideposts. While the team ultimately amended and augmented some of these state strategic directives for its final set of recommendations (see Table 4, next page), the team proposed the four drivers below (i.e., the most influential state strategic directives) for implementation:

- Create a common vision that directs and focuses efforts for all students achieving educational standards (State Directive 7).
- Support a capacity building, inclusive personnel development structure focused on increased student achievement (State Directive 34).
- Develop personnel development that focuses on defining, creating, sustaining, and evaluating a quality host environment (State Directive 65).
- Combine the various monitoring, auditing systems into one process that funnels through the school improvement/continuous improvement plan (State Directive 3).

Table 3

*Cycles of Local Strategic Directives Not Able to Fit on Figure 6 As Indicated by **

Cycle on:

- Develop administrative teams with general and special education expertise. (Local Directive 37)
- Promote effective improvement planning. (Local Directive 89)
- Develop (data-driven) universal researched practices that impact all student achievement providing support for sustainability. (Local Directive 27)
- Support development and use of formative and summative evaluation system for grade level and whole school. (Local Directive 86)

Cycle on:

- Institute systems of individuation for assessment, curriculum, and collaborative problem solving that embrace a model of prevention. (Local Directive 19)
- Promote comprehensive, sustained personnel development designed to meet the academic and behavioral needs of students. (Local Directive 96)

Cycle on:

- Provide more training in all stages of transitions. (Local Directive 44)
- Support integrated teams for staff and student assistance in each school building. (Local Directive 7)
- Assist educators with the use of assessment to improve instruction. (Local Directive 18)

Cycle on:

- Build host environments to support education of all students. (Local Directive 18)
- Create opportunity for multiple community groups and agencies to utilize greater resources to unify systems of support for all students. (Local Directive 54)

Note: Directives that “cycle” have mutual influence (implementing “X” significantly helps in implementing “Y” or vice versa).

School Age Improvement Plan Framework

Foundational to enabling students with disabilities to reach challenging educational standards will be a common vision that focuses efforts for all students:

1. To have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity for a high quality education.
2. To receive effective instruction and services, informed by assessments aligned with the general curriculum.
3. To demonstrate achievement on the Michigan Curriculum Framework content standards and benchmarks.

At the heart of the DfR Team's recommendation is a "unified system" that, in the words of one participant, is "not special education or general education but one system where teachers learn to teach with accommodations and modifications" so that all learners are successful. Such a system is dependent upon such factors as adequate administrative authority, flexible funding and roles, an integrated and quality personnel preparation and development system, and data-based continuous improvement. Consistent with the diagnosis of barriers to students with disabilities reaching challenging educational standards (see Figure 5), significant attention must be paid to building staff capacity through an integrated preservice system within universities and an inclusive inservice structure focused on facilitating local building guideposts and enabling student achievement. A more cohesive system of personnel development, guidance, and technical assistance will support host environments (learning communities) that promote collaborative and sustained learning. The provision of tools, technical assistance, and other supports is especially important at high priority schools to improve student performance.

Table 4

Consensus Profile of State Strategic Directives That Facilitate Implementation of Local Building Guideposts to Enable Students With Disabilities to Reach Challenging Educational Standards

LEADERSHIP/ VISION	SYSTEM REFORM	COMMUNICATION	PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT/ GUIDANCE & TA		DATA/ MONITORING & OVERSIGHT
Create a common vision that directs and focuses efforts for all students achieving educational standards (7 - State Directive)	Build an integrated system within universities that trains all teachers together (9 - State Directive)	Communicate progress of state and federal initiatives to local ISDs and supporting agencies (i.e., communications/ marketing director) (50 - State Directive)	Provide tools, TA, and other supports to high priority schools (to create communities of learners) to improve student performance (74 - State Directive)	Develop funding opportunities for locals that support a sustained learning model (36 - State Directive)	Combine the various monitoring and auditing systems into one process that funnels through the school improvement/ continuous improvement plan (3 - State Directive)
Establish administrative authority to build and empower a unified system (SST) that provides for the needs of all students (2 - State Directive)	Provide flexibility in funding and roles for school employees responsible for student learning (22 - State Directive)		Support a capacity building, inclusive personnel development structure focused on increased student achievement (34 - State Directive)	Develop personnel development that focuses on defining, creating, sustaining, and evaluating a quality host environment (65 - State Directive)	
Adopt a paradigm shift to build a unified system (Rules change) (6 - State Directive)			Support development of highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals (73 - State Directive)	Ensure that students with disabilities are served in their LRE (76 - State Directive)	Provide a "user friendly" data system to provide schools with feedback on implementing strategic directives (21 - State Directive)
			Provide inservice for school personnel and parents on Rules, regulations, IEP process, etc. (72 - State Directive)	Ensure all educators (special education and general education) understand and utilize common curricular goals and objectives (66 - State Directive)	
			Develop and disseminate comprehensive case studies of successful implementation of <i>Education YES!</i> requirements to each type of district in the state (urban, suburban, and rural) (54 - State Directive)	Identify and design a system for TA that supports implementation of the local building guideposts and a unified system of service delivery (75 - State Directive)	

Secondary Transition

Overview

Performance Results (Identified by the CIMP Steering Committee)

- Young adults with disabilities participate in community life.
- Young adults with disabilities have the knowledge and skills to be self-determined.
- Young adults with disabilities have employment, further education, or other meaningful activities.
- Young adults with disabilities are lifelong learners.

Design Inquiry (Through discovery and priority-setting by the Core Planning Team, the following Secondary Transition result was targeted for design.)

Secondary Transition DfR Team. Diagnose and recommend strategic directives for addressing the system of challenges to help young adults fully participate in employment, further education, or other meaningful activities.

Secondary Transition DfR Team

Robert Avedisian	Scott Hubble	Deb Russell
Sally Burton-Hoyle	Walter Kwik	Chuck Saur
Monica Bushey	Monika Leasure	Michael Shea
Elizabeth Clark	Joanna Lofton	Sheila Shuler
Bonnie Crowson	Pat MacQuarrie	David Smith
John Dickey	Peggy McNeilly	Beth Steenwyk
Janice Fialka	Mark McWilliams	Gary Stelzer
Sharon Field	Brunhilde Merk-Adam	Randy VanGasse
Janet Fisher	Karen Gardner	Lynn Walden
Mary-Eileen Goss	Maureen Nowak	Maureen Wallace
Donald Habkirk, Jr.	Mike O'Leary	Wayne Wolbert
William Hartl	Greg Paffhouse	Jan Yoak-Newman

Secondary Transition: Challenges to Young Adults Fully Participating

The Secondary Transition DfR Team diagnosed 13 dimensions or clusters of challenges that inhibit young adults with disabilities from fully participating in employment, further education, and other meaningful activities. The team explored these design dimensions for their influence relationships. Deeply rooted on Level V of Figure 7, the most influential challenges are governing variables (such as pupil accounting rules that limit funding for time that students spend in community placements) and data-driven evaluation (for meaningful student-centered planning and systemic improvement). Addressing these challenges would significantly help in addressing all other challenges. Also of great influence is equity of opportunity and engagement for individuals with disabilities such as the disparity in transition services available from one county or school district to the next. It is also important to address challenges with the education and support of the individual's family. Communication with family members must occur in a way that helps them contribute to their child's progress.

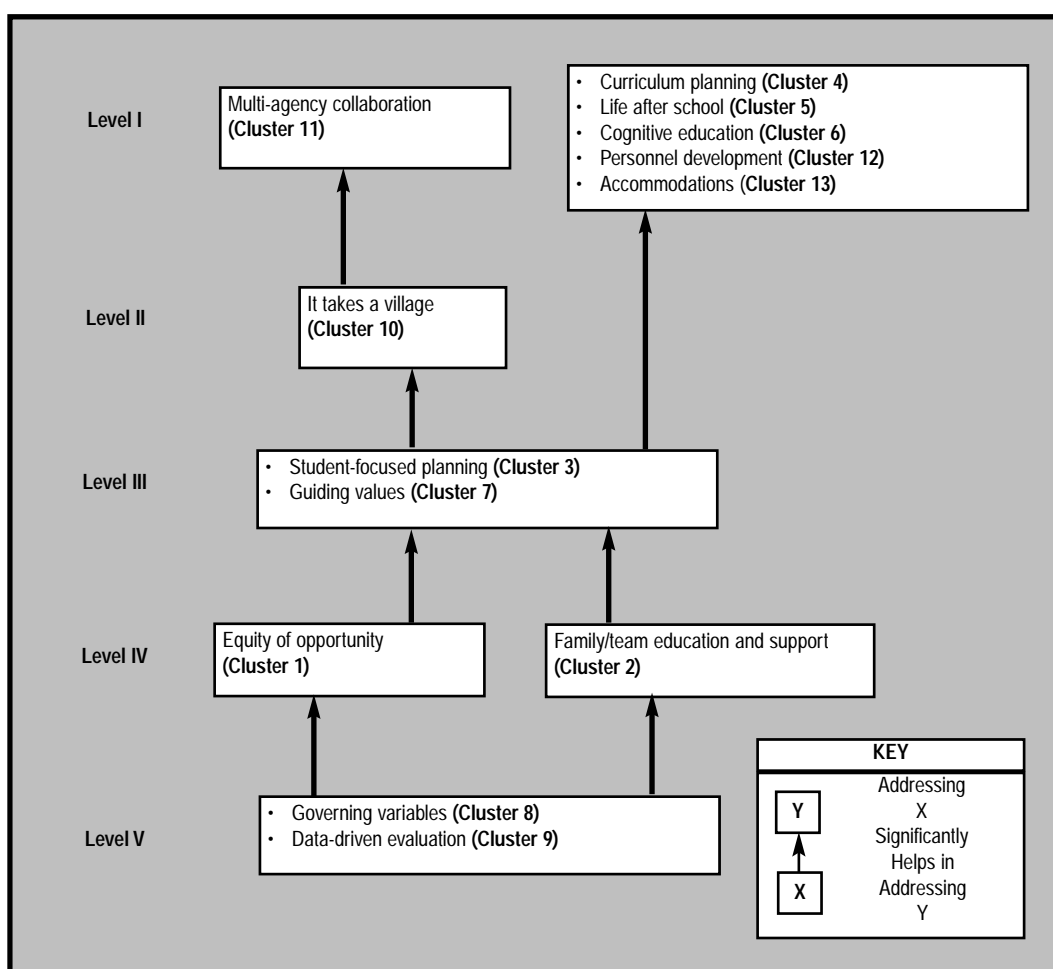


Figure 7. Influence Map of Clusters of Challenges That Inhibit Young Adults With Disabilities from Fully Participating in Employment, Further Education, or Other Meaningful Activities.

Secondary Transition Improvement Plan Framework

As reflected in Table 5, the Secondary Transition DfR Team recommended three types of strategic directives.

- The “data-driven decision making” cluster speaks to the need for operating from a data-driven perspective. Acting on data ensures a deeper understanding of transition issues and accountability measures that assist in program improvement and improved student outcomes. Promoting full participation of young adults with disabilities in secondary opportunities requires a process for meaningfully identifying, measuring, and advancing program improvement toward appropriate transition outcomes for all students (Strategic Directives 27 and 9).
- The “collaboration and multi-agency coordination” cluster promotes a collaborative system for secondary transition that breaks down silos by using a common language and developing a system for sharing information. As an example to the field, it is important that collaboration be modeled between and among the Michigan Department of Education and other state agencies (Strategic Directive 1). A plan is needed to promote secondary transition as a priority among the multi-purpose collaborative bodies (Strategic Directive 75). Structural supports, such as funding rules to meet individual needs or expanded Medicaid eligibility for working persons with disabilities (Strategic Directives 11 and 6) are critical.
- The third cluster of strategic directives is about “supporting stakeholders in transition.” Integration and implementation of all meaningful student-focused planning processes, such as the Education Development Plan (EDP) and the Individualized Education Program (IEP), will assist greatly (Strategic Directive 8). As well, it is important to engage families as active, confident partners through family-friendly transition discussions and supports (Strategic Directive 14). Professionals, families, and students must be provided meaningful personnel development and technical assistance (Strategic Directives 62, 48, 23, and 57).

Table 5

Consensus Profile of Strategic Directives That Address the System of Challenges to Help Young Adults Fully Participate in Employment, Further Education, or Other Meaningful Activities

DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING	COLLABORATION/ MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATION	SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDERS IN TRANSITION
Adopt a process to measure outcomes using federal focused monitoring report and other K-12 and post-school data to improve programs (27 - Strategic Directive)	Promote effective communication as it is essential to all challenges, clusters, and directives (72 - Strategic Directive)	Maintain a clearinghouse of transition resources accessible to all stakeholders, including disability-specific accommodation options (48 - Strategic Directive)
Compile solid research related to transition outcomes for all students (9 - Strategic Directive)	Model collaboration between and among MDE departments and agencies (i.e., mental health, K-12, community) for the field (1 - Strategic Directive)	Provide family-friendly transition discussions and supports with families as a way to ensure their understanding of the issues and increase their confidence with their role as partners (14 - Strategic Directive)
	Advocate, in collaboration with other key groups and state agencies, for transportation services to help students fully participate in further education and meaningful activities (61 - Strategic Directive)	Ensure staff development occurs annually for local school staffs on the transition process and on ways to develop students with self-advocacy skills beginning at the elementary level (62 - Strategic Directive)
	Develop a plan to promote secondary transition as a priority among the multi-purpose collaborative bodies (75 - Strategic Directive)	Find ways to assist special education teachers to have available time to participate in transition (57 - Strategic Directive)
	Adjust the school funding rules to meet individual student's needs (11 - Strategic Directive)	Ensure that students at every level know how to self-advocate to ensure the transition process is truly student-focused planning (23 - Strategic Directive)
	Support expanded Medicaid eligibility for working persons with disabilities as a necessary part of successful transition. Align with focused monitoring regarding school exit data (6 - Strategic Directive)	Provide a variety of support to students, parents, educators, and agency representatives to integrate and implement all meaningful student-focused planning processes (e.g., EDP and IEP at all grade levels) (8 - Strategic Directive)
	Create a strategy to increase demand for employers to employ people with disabilities to work for them (74 - Strategic Directive)	Standardize the process for the equitable selection, training, and funding of accommodations including assistive and access technologies (28 - Strategic Directive)

General Supervision

Overview

Performance Results (Identified by the CIMP Steering Committee)

The MDE, the OSE/EIS assures a collaborative, effective, statewide system for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities and/or developmental delays (birth to 26), and their families, resulting in timely access to appropriate resources and services that ensure Early Intervention Services in the Natural Environment (EIS in the NE) and free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment (FAPE in the LRE).

OSEP Areas of Concern (Determined through self-assessment and OSEP validation)

- The hearing officer selection process
- Timeliness
- Limited ability to track patterns of concern
- Limited use of mediation
- Oversight of corrective actions

Design Inquiry

- *Mediation System DfR Team.* Idealize and recommend strategic directives for an ideal mediation system for dispute resolution.
- *Hearing System DfR Team.* Diagnose and recommend strategic directives for addressing problems with the existing due process hearing system.
- *Complaint Investigation System–The OSE/EIS.* Diagnose and recommend strategic directives for addressing problems with the existing complaint investigation system, including completion of complaints within timelines, ability to track patterns of concern, and oversight of corrective actions.
- *Due Process DfR Team.* Diagnose barriers and root causes and recommend strategic directives for an effective and responsive due process system. Drawing on learning across all lines of inquiry, General Supervision Steering Committee members idealized the due process system and proposed meta-strategic directives that shaped the improvement plan.

General Supervision DfR Team

Kathy Barker	Scott Hubble	Mary Schrader
Laura Bassein	Shari Krishnan	Larry Simpson
Lyn Beekman	Mark McWilliams	David Soebbing
David Brock	Brunhilde Merk-Adam	Roberta Stanley
Asa Brown	Pam Mish	Beth Steenwyk
Deborah K. Canja	Mike O’Leary	Sue Tarrant
Kathleen Clegg	Judy Pazol	Tony Thaxton
Ron Greiner	Hugh Reid	Jacquelyn Thompson
Lauren Harkness	Eric Richards	Laurie VanderPloeg
Diane Heinzelman	Karen Rockhold	Martha Wilson
Maureen Hockstra	Jim Rowell	Duncan Wyeth

Note: The General Supervision action plan including activities and timelines is available on the web at: www.michigan.gov/documents/CIMPDecember2002_76601_7.pdf.

General Supervision: Problems Inhibiting an Effective/Responsive Due Process System

In May 2002, participants in the Steering Committee Meeting on General Supervision diagnosed problems that inhibit the achievement of an effective and responsive due process system. The influence map below (see Figure 8) was a tool to inform this work. The group identified problems with the existing due process hearing system and their influence relationships. As seen in Level IV of the influence map, the group determined that lack of short- and long-term data from all users of the due process system regarding the process and outcomes (Problem 58) was the most influential barrier. Resolution of Problem 58 significantly influences resolution of the lack of data regarding effective due process hearing systems (Problem 13) as indicated by the arrows.

Several problems identified related to the lack of knowledge, information, clarity, or understanding about the process, its goals, or alternative options for both parents and personnel (Problems 27, 56, 61). The lack of information from professional organizations regarding the standard of practice (Problem 5) and the perceived difference in the balance of power between parents and the schools regarding knowledge and cost (Problem 11) influenced both the failure to promote collaboration for student benefit (Problem 14) and the fear about the stakes in the due process system and inaccessibility, for districts and parents (Problems 45, 4).

Additional issues surfaced around the hearing officers at the state and local levels regarding competence, bias, and selection process as well as the resulting lack of confidence due to the perceived bias (Problems 2, 9, 21, 22). The group also identified the failure to provide students subject to a due process hearing with free appropriate public education (FAPE) in a timely manner (Problem 1).

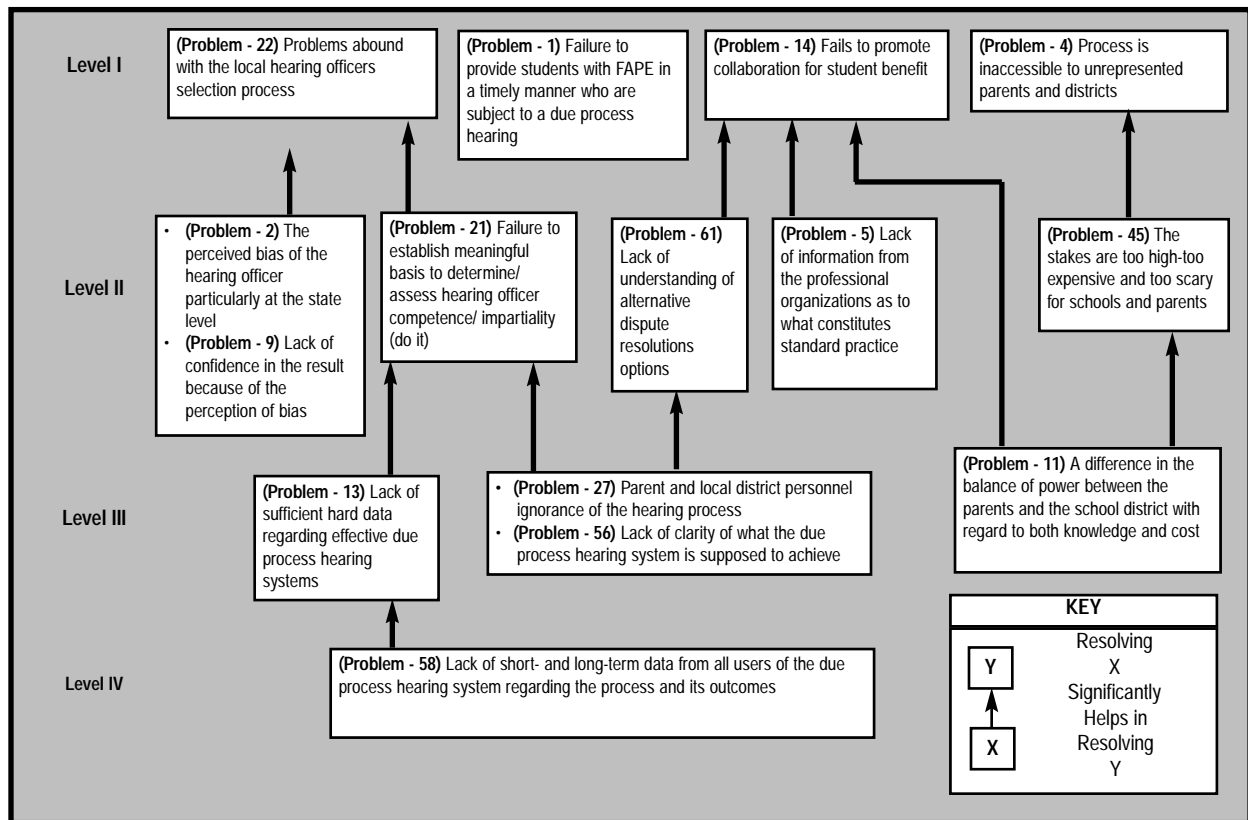


Figure 8. Influence Map of Perceived and Anticipated Problems With the Existing Due Process Hearing System.

The Ideal Due Process System

The DfR Team came to understand disputes as natural occurrences in determining the needs and services of children. In the words of one participant, what is critical is having “a system within which those disputes can be managed and be the least likely to destroy relationships while guaranteeing that students with disabilities are provided an education that will prepare them for a satisfying future after leaving school.” A major reframing of what were previously understood to be discrete general supervision systems emerged. The OSE/EIS reconceptualized the due process system as an integrated system that is aligned with the intent of federal requirements and that provides a continuum of alternate dispute resolution (including mediation), effective complaint resolution, and hearings. By far, the majority of differences are addressed through consensus building and informal conflict resolution approaches.

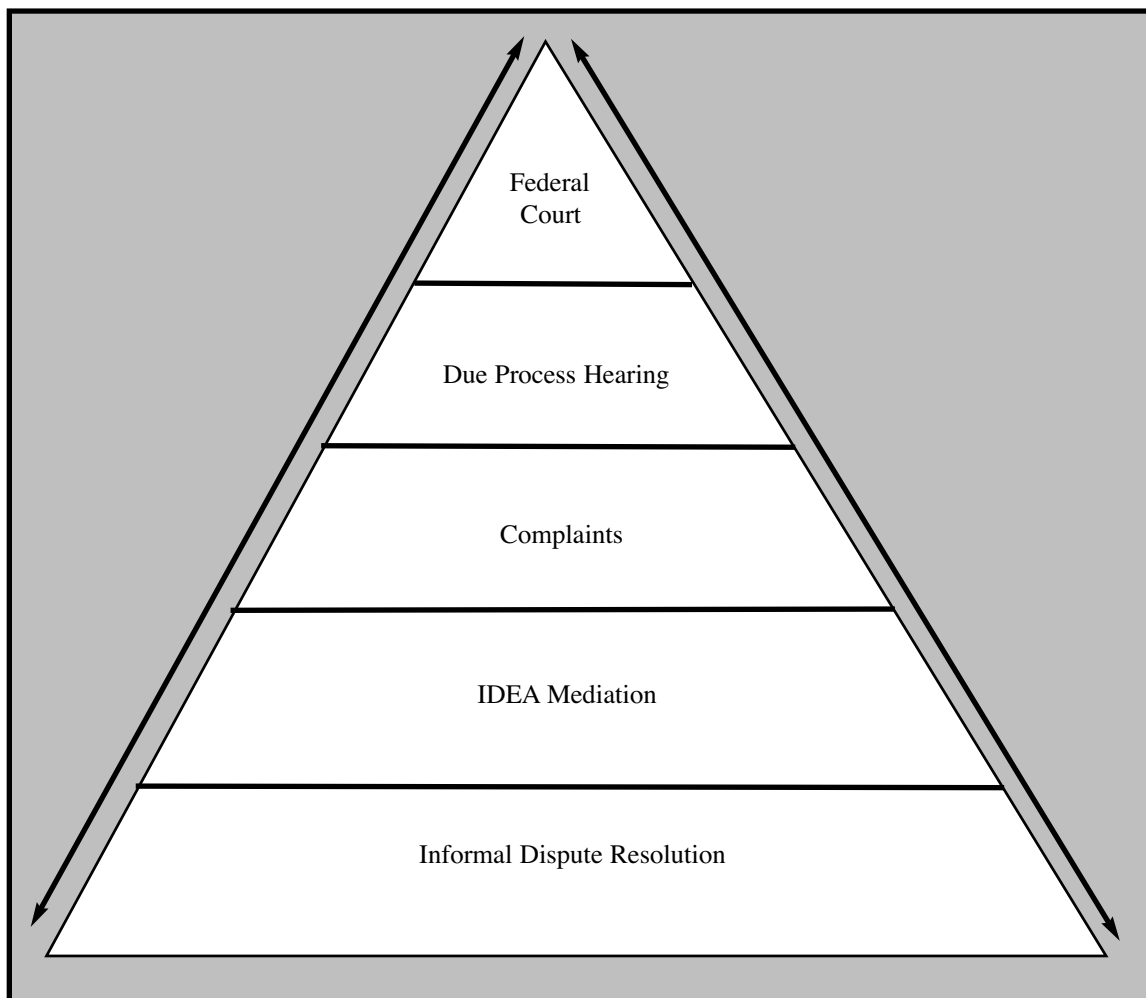


Figure 9. The Ideal Due Process System.

General Supervision Improvement Plan Framework

The General Supervision Improvement Plan Framework addresses five areas of concern (see Table 6, page 21).

- *New Spirit*. The DfR Team embraced the need to revamp Michigan's due process system to respond to new understandings of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA). The team recommended conceptually aligning Michigan's due process system with the intent and spirit of the federal requirements for resolving disputes (Strategic Directive 40). This recommendation was identified as the most influential strategic directive ("the deepest driver") in improving the general supervision system (see Figure 10).
- *Alternate Dispute Resolution*. Envisioned as the most commonly used component of the due process system, alternate dispute resolution includes both informal mechanisms as well as formal approaches, such as mediation. The DfR Team agreed that the new system must be based on a foundation, a culture of fellowship. Deliberate fellowship among the education establishment and students and parents (Strategic Directive 47) will prevent the escalation of many disputes to an adversarial stage. To address OSEP's concern regarding limited use of mediation, the mediation process should be designed with the components necessary to make it an attractive and effective IDEA mediation system that is built on a commitment to build or rebuild "deliberate fellowship" (Strategic Directive 45).

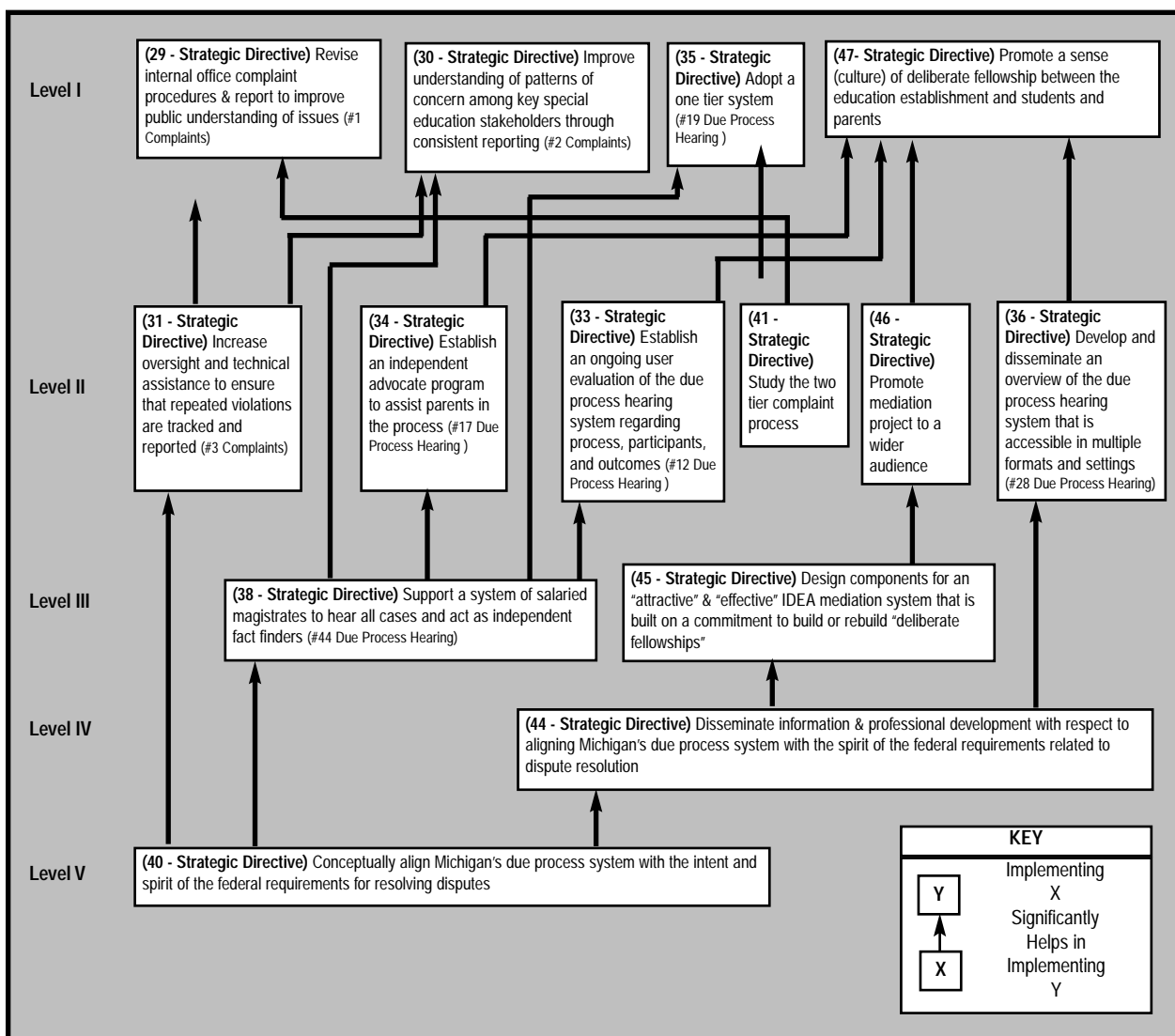


Figure 10. Influence Map of Meta-Strategic Directives Selected Across Areas of Concern for General Supervision.

- **Effective Complaint System.** The Michigan compliance information system was developed to track the timeliness of complaints. Breakdowns occur due to the complexity of issues, difficulty getting needed information, and inadequate documentation of timelines. Tracking patterns of concern and oversight of corrective action are also areas of concern. The internal office complaint procedures and reporting need to be revised to improve public understanding of issues (Strategic Directive 29) and to improve understanding of patterns of concern (Strategic Directive 30). Oversight and technical assistance need to be increased (Strategic Directive 31). The DfR Team recommended that the two-tier complaint process be studied and considered (Strategic Directive 41).
- **Hearing System Design.** Hearings are a small component of the due process system relative to mediation and less formal alternate dispute resolution. The DfR Team recommended a one-tiered hearing system (Strategic Directive 35) with a system of salaried magistrates to hear all cases and act as independent fact finders (Strategic Directive 38). Stakeholders further proposed an independent advocate program with advocates trained in special education and the philosophy of the system to assist parents with the process (Strategic Directive 34). Reducing attorney involvement will reduce costs and promote a better balance of power. The DfR Team also recommended an ongoing user evaluation of the due process hearing system regarding process, participants, and outcomes (Strategic Directive 33).
- **Marketing.** “It is really important to let all stakeholders know that the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services is going to revamp the due process system so that it will be of more value in relation to outcomes for students with disabilities,” said one participant. Hence, the DfR Team recommended that the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services strategically roll out the realignment of the due process system with the spirit of the federal requirements related to dispute resolution (Strategic Directive 44). Using multiple formats and settings, the hearing system should be disseminated (Strategic Directive 36) and the mediation project promoted to a wider audience (Strategic Directive 46).

Table 6

General Supervision Improvement Plan Framework (Meta-Strategic Directives)

NEW SPIRIT	ALTERNATE DISPUTE RESOLUTION	EFFECTIVE COMPLAINT SYSTEM	HEARING SYSTEM DESIGN	MARKETING
Conceptually align Michigan's due process system with the intent and spirit of the federal requirements for resolving disputes (40 - Strategic Directive)	Design components for an “attractive” and “effective” IDEA mediation system that is built on a commitment to build or rebuild “deliberate fellowship” (45 - Strategic Directive)	Oversight (A): Increase oversight and technical assistance to ensure that repeated violations are tracked and reported (31 - Strategic Directive)	Oversight (A): Support a system of salaried magistrates to hear all cases and act as independent fact finders (38 - Strategic Directive)	Awareness & Dissemination (DD): Develop and disseminate an overview of the due process hearing system that is accessible in multiple formats and settings (36 - Strategic Directive)
	Promote a sense (culture) of deliberate fellowship between the education establishment and students and parents (47 - Strategic Directive)	Oversight (B): Study the two-tier complaint process (41 - Strategic Directive)	Oversight (A): Adopt a one-tier system (35 - Strategic Directive)	Disseminate information and personnel development with respect to aligning Michigan's due process system with the spirit of the federal requirements related to dispute resolution (44 - Strategic Directive)
		Oversight (C-CC): Revise internal office complaint procedures and report to improve public understanding of issues (29 - Strategic Directive)	Oversight (AA) & Evaluation (B): Establish an ongoing user evaluation of the due process hearing system regarding process, participants, and outcomes (33 - Strategic Directive)	Promote mediation project to a wider audience (46 - Strategic Directive)
		Awareness & Dissemination (D): Improve understanding of patterns of concern among key special education stakeholders through consistent reporting (30 - Strategic Directive)	Capacity Building (E): Establish an independent advocate program to assist parents in the process (34 - Strategic Directive)	

Appendix A—School Age Improvement Plan Framework

The School Age Improvement Plan Framework identifies implementation activities in five cluster areas:

- A. Leadership/Vision
- B. Systems reform
- C. Communication
- D. Personnel development, guidance, and technical assistance
- E. Data/monitoring and oversight

Cluster A: Leadership/Vision

The School Age Design for Results® Team envisioned an educational system that provided quality education for all students, promoted among educational leadership and supported by a common vision of a unified system. This unified system would provide for the needs of all students, thus promoting the achievement of educational standards by students with disabilities.

Leadership/Vision Strategic Directives

- Establish administrative authority to build and empower a unified system (Student Support Teams) that provides for the needs of all students (Strategic Directive 2).
- Adopt a paradigm shift to build a unified system through Special Education rules change (Strategic Directive 6).
- Create a common vision that directs and focuses efforts for all students achieving educational standards (Strategic Directive 7).

Activities to Implement Strategic Directives

Activity Number	Activity	Year
SA:A01	Identify and disseminate information about model sites of unified practices.	1
SA:A02	Convene stakeholder groups to guide the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services response to the State Board of Education's June '03 request for policy recommendations regarding the vision and principles of universal education.	1
SA:A03	Engage building and district leadership in supporting a unified vision of serving ALL students reflective of the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process local building guideposts.	1
SA:A04	Facilitate learning opportunities that clarify administrative authority (e.g., finance, utilization of staff) and provide models/plans for system changes.	2
SA:A05	Identify activities/outcomes that cannot be currently pursued under the current regulatory structure. For those outcomes requiring rule changes, propose new rule wording and provide clear justification statements.	2
SA:A06	Identify ways to reallocate resources to result in a more unified system and the attainment of desired student outcomes.	2
SA:A07	Communicate the meaning of universal education through the work of the State Board of Education referent group, <i>FOCUS on Results</i> , <i>Leading Change</i> , and other publications and presentations, as appropriate.	2

Cluster B: Systems Reform

An important theme in the School Age Design for Results work was supporting educators in their work to teach all students. At a preservice level, it is important for general education and special education personnel to share expertise to improve all teachers' skills. This also models flexibility in roles for school employees. In addition, changes in funding are instrumental to accomplish the systems reform necessary for students with disabilities to reach challenging educational standards.

Systems Reform Strategic Directives

- Build an integrated system within universities that trains all teachers together (Strategic Directive 9).
- Provide flexibility in funding and roles for school employees responsible for student learning (Strategic Directive 22).

Activities to Implement Strategic Directives

Activity Number	Activity	Year
SA:B01	Convene Institutions of Higher Education Committee meeting(s) to examine requirements for Highly Qualified personnel as defined in <i>No Child Left Behind Act</i> and <i>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</i> and make recommendations for possible Michigan rule or university requirements changes.	1
SA:B02	Develop a plan with the Office of Professional Preparation Services to update teacher preparation requirements regarding accommodations for students with disabilities for all new teachers in Michigan.	1
SA:B03	Allow flexible options in Special Education Intermediate School District plans through Rule 1832 E to encourage design of programs that enhance student performance while maintaining high standards of accountability.	1
SA:B04	Provide input to <i>Leading Change, FOCUS on Results</i> , Center for Educational Networking and Michigan Department of Education Web site postings, and presentations concerning state and federal initiatives and examples of flexible funding and roles.	2
SA:B05	Explore possibilities in amending pupil accounting rules to enhance flexibility in staff utilization.	2
SA:B06	Convene focus groups to identify ways to build an integrated teacher training system based on the proposed rules.	2
SA:B07	Convene a special education and general education Institutions of Higher Education stakeholder group to examine an integrated system and make recommendations to adopt strategies to change current practices.	2
SA:B08	Design opportunities for university faculty to pilot integrated preservice education programs.	3

Cluster C: Communication

Communication is crucial to the success of systemic reform on behalf of improved student achievement. One aspect is the importance of state interaction with Intermediate School Districts and local agencies.

Communication Strategic Directive

Communicate progress of state and federal initiatives to local Intermediate School Districts and supporting agencies (i.e., Communications/Marketing Director) (Strategic Directive 50).

Activities to Implement Strategic Directives

Activity Number	Activity	Year
SA:C01	Establish and routinely use an array of electronic lists to enable the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services to send out information in a timely fashion to key audiences.	1
SA:C02	Monitor the Michigan Department of Education and the Center for Educational Networking Web sites and adjust them as permitted in order to ensure that they are up to date and easily accessible.	1
SA:C03	Continue Special Education policy liaison positions with regional Intermediate School District special education directors.	1
SA:C04	Provide input to <i>Leading Change</i> and <i>FOCUS on Results</i> , Center for Educational Networking Web site postings, and presentations concerning state and federal initiatives.	2
SA:C05	Meet and cooperate with key stakeholder groups and educational organizations.	1-3

Cluster D: Personnel Development, Guidance, and Technical Assistance

Capacity building among families and school personnel is paramount to ensure that all students with disabilities reach challenging educational standards. The majority of strategic directives recommended by the Design for Results Team targets designing and implementing an effective system for personnel development and technical assistance. Qualities, content, and outcomes of this system were specified across the strategic directives. Due to the comprehensive nature of this cluster (Cluster 4) of strategic directives, some of these strategic directives will be addressed by additional activities following the initiation of implementation of other directives.

Qualities of an effective system of personnel development and technical assistance:

1. Create inclusive communities of learners (i.e., families, paraprofessionals, general and special educators, and administrators).
2. Support local learning opportunities, especially in high priority schools.
3. Promote sustained learning.
4. Build capacity.
5. Evaluate.

Core content of personnel development and technical assistance to ensure that all students with disabilities reach challenging educational standards:

1. Scientifically-based instructional practices that contribute to student achievement in the least restrictive environment.
2. Local building guideposts (a blueprint of five systems that interact in any school and can be improved to build the school's achievement potential in meeting rigorous content standards).
3. Universal education (a unified system of service delivery).
4. Aligned curriculum, assessment, and instruction.
5. Quality host environment (a welcoming learning community that supports integrated teams of general and special educators) for the success of all students.
6. Policies and procedures (e.g. rules, regulations, *Education YES!* requirements, criteria for Highly Qualified personnel, Individualized Education Program process).

Outcomes of an effective system of personnel development and technical assistance:

1. Highly qualified personnel.
2. Service to students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment.
3. Increased student achievement and all students with disabilities reach challenging educational standards.

Personnel Development, Guidance, and Technical Assistance Strategic Directives

- Support a capacity building, inclusive personnel development structure focused on increased student achievement (Strategic Directive 34).
- Develop funding opportunities for locals that support sustained learning model (Strategic Directive 36).
- Develop and disseminate comprehensive case studies of successful implementation of *Education YES!* requirements to each type of district in the state (urban, suburban, rural) (Strategic 54).
- Develop personnel development that focuses on defining, creating, sustaining, and evaluating a quality host environment (Strategic Directive 65).
- Ensure all educators (special education and general education) understand and utilize common curricular goals and objectives (Strategic Directive 66).
- Provide inservice for school personnel and parents on rules, regulations, Individualized Education Program process, etc. (Strategic Directive 72).
- Support development of highly qualified teachers, paraprofessionals (Strategic Directive 73).

Cluster D: Personnel Development, Guidance, and Technical Assistance (continued)

- Provide tools, technical assistance, and other supports to high priority schools (to create communities of learners) to improve student performance (Strategic Directive 74).
- Design a system for technical assistance that supports implementation of local building guideposts to promote a unified system of service delivery (Strategic Directive 75).
- Ensure that students with disabilities are served in their least restrictive environment (Strategic Directive 76).

Activities to Implement Strategic Directives

Activity Number	Activity	Year
SA:D01	Develop the six core content areas to be addressed by an effective personnel development and technical assistance system to support student achievement.	1
SA:D02	In all Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services hosted functions, model qualities of effective personnel development and technical assistance.	1
SA:D03	Develop a method for determining school improvement needs in high priority schools and other schools in need of technical assistance (using least restrictive environment, dropout/graduation data) and the initiatives that would best meet those needs.	1
SA:D04	Use effective delivery models (printed articles, Web site, satellite learning) and successful examples (model sites, case studies) to disseminate information that builds capacity of parents and educators.	1
SA:D05	Develop an instructional system with other networks and relevant organizations (e.g., State Improvement Grant Leadership Initiative, Michigan Education Association/Michigan Federation of Teachers, Institutions of Higher Education/Community Colleges) to build capacity of educators and paraprofessionals and help them meet criteria to become highly qualified.	1
SA:D06	Structure personnel development and technical assistance grant activities to reflect the qualities and core content of an effective personnel development and technical assistance system to ensure student achievement.	1
SA:D07	Build into the design of Requests for Proposals expectations that reflect the qualities and core content of an effective personnel development and technical assistance system to ensure student achievement.	1
SA:D08	Within the Michigan Department of Education, communicate and coordinate efforts about the qualities and core content of an effective personnel development and technical assistance system to ensure student achievement.	1
SA:D09	Evaluate the impact of an effective personnel development and technical assistance system to ensure student achievement and provide opportunities to support needed modifications.	2
SA:D10	Provide incentives through grant opportunities to Institutions of Higher Education to establish professional development schools in high priority buildings.	3
SA:D11	Use multi-source data (e.g. monitoring, statewide assessment, and Intermediate School Districts needs assessments) to identify personnel development and technical assistance needs related to provision of least restrictive environment.	2-3
SA:D12	Provide personnel development and technical assistance in the use of evidence-based practices that address least restrictive environment issues and concerns.	2-3

Cluster E: Data/Monitoring and Oversight

Design for Results participants saw the need for data to be usable and meaningful. Monitoring provides a means to ensure access to the general curriculum through the least restrictive environment information as defined by the student's Individualized Education Program. Alignment of various monitoring and auditing systems into one process, using the existing structures such as school improvement or the continuous improvement process, was a means to increase the impact of the process.

Data/Monitoring and Oversight Strategic Directives

- Combine the various monitoring auditing systems into one process that funnels through the school improvement/continuous improvement process (Strategic Directive 3).
- Provide a “user-friendly” data system to provide schools with feedback on implementing strategic directives (Strategic Directive 21).
- Ensure that students with disabilities are served in their least restrictive environment (Strategic Directive 76).

Activities to Implement Strategic Directives

Activity Number	Activity	Year
SA:E01	Develop a Continuous Improvement Focused Monitoring model that facilitates capacity building for Intermediate School Districts/Local Education Agencies with regard to self-assessment, analysis, and improvement planning.	1
SA:E02	Support schools in determining which federal, state, and local data are important for their school improvement plans.	1
SA:E03	Specify which stakeholders are needed for local educational agencies' self-assessment data collection and evaluation.	1
SA:E04	Investigate simple software mechanisms (e.g. MI-Plan) to communicate feedback on implementation of strategic directives.	1
SA:E05	Develop a method for determining school improvement needs within high priority schools (including special education, self-assessment, focused monitoring, and systemic issues).	2
SA:E06	Use multi-source data to evaluate the implementation and continuous improvement of services for students with disabilities provided in the least restrictive environment.	2

Appendix B—Secondary Transition Improvement Plan Framework

Strategic Directives to improve secondary transition outcomes for students with disabilities clustered around three broad but interrelated areas:

- A. Use of data-driven decision making.
- B. Enhancement of collaboration among agencies that serve students and adults with disabilities.
- C. Support of the various stakeholders who must work together efficiently to improve student outcomes.

Cluster A: Data-Driven Decision Making

The Secondary Transition Design for Results participants stated that better collection and use of data were necessary to enhance everyone's understanding of what works and what does not work in obtaining positive post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. They urged the state to compile and publicize solid research related to student outcomes, as well as direct the systematic measurement of K-12 and post-school outcomes. These data need to be incorporated into a single system of continuous improvement that integrates with school improvement planning and focused monitoring.

Data-Driven Decision Making Strategic Directives

- Compile solid research related to transition outcomes for all students (Strategic Directive 9).
- Adopt a process to measure outcomes, collect K-12 and post-school data, and use the follow-up data to improve programs (Strategic Directive 27).

Activities to Implement Strategic Directives

Activity Number	Activity	Year
ST:A01	Update administrators periodically to engage and sustain support.	1
ST:A02	Collect information at Individualized Education Program meetings or Person-Centered Planning meetings from parents, families, and students on their experience.	1
ST:A03	Design, implement, and refine the Continuous Improvement Process for Transition.	1
ST:A04	Design a process that ensures that the Transition Continuous Improvement Monitoring Model links to school improvement planning through engagement of local educational agencies/building level and Intermediate School District coordinators.	1
ST:A05	Design a component of the Special Education review process that collects ongoing, meaningful data to support continuous improvement.	1
ST:A06	Compile information regarding exemplary transition programs/policies from around the state and post on Web site.	2
ST:A07	Facilitate local educational agencies/Intermediate School Districts across the state design and implement improvement strategies aligned with quality practices and programs.	2
ST:A08	Post/publish stories from successful schools as models of good transition practice and to promote learning.	2
ST:A09	Begin collection of post-school outcome data for one year/three years and add to Transition Continuous Improvement data profile.	3
ST:A10	Post outcomes data on the Transition Resources Web site and the Center for Educational Networking Web site for viewing by the public and others as appropriate.	3
ST:A11	Review Individualized Education Programs over time to determine the level of engagement of students and resulting outcomes.	3

Cluster B: Collaboration/Multi-Agency Coordination

Design for Results participants recognized that making changes in the educational system will require consistent and thoughtful communications, training, and technical assistance. Making these changes also requires that we broaden our perspective as to what constitutes “the system” to include parents, policy makers, adult service agencies, employers, and the community. Major adjustments in the design of the system are required if we are to provide equitable access for students around the state. Inequities in funding and transportation infrastructure currently hinder social, educational, and employment opportunities for many students with disabilities. These barriers will need to be addressed by the sustained collaboration of a broad coalition of stakeholders.

Collaboration/Multi-Agency Coordination Strategic Directives

- Model collaboration between and among MDE departments and agencies (e.g. mental health, K-12, community) for the field (Strategic Directive 1).
- Support expanded Medicaid eligibility for working persons with disabilities as a necessary part of successful transition (Strategic Directive 6).
- Adjust the school funding rules to meet individual student’s needs (Strategic Directive 11).
- Advocate, in collaboration with other key groups and state agencies, for transportation services to help students fully participate in further education and meaningful activities (Strategic Directive 61).
- Effective communication is essential to all challenges, clusters, and directives (Strategic Directive 72).
- Create a strategy to increase demand for employers to employ people with disabilities to work for them (Strategic Directive 74).
- Develop a plan to promote secondary transition as a priority with the multi-purpose collaborative bodies (Strategic Directive 75).

Activities to Implement Strategic Directives

Activity Number	Activity	Year
ST:B01	Communicate to the field, transition and technical assistance work around issues forums driven by Design for Results Team process and strategic directives (transportation, multi-purpose collaborative bodies, Medicaid, school funding rules, employment, etc.).	1
ST:B02	Update 2004-2005 transition flow-through grant application to align with Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (require reporting and evidence).	1
ST:B03	Formulate strategies to shape supportive transition policies through the Transition Network Team (transportation, Medicaid, school funding rules).	1
ST:B04	Participate in and support multi-agency efforts to collaborate (including multi-purpose collaborative bodies) on transition services, collecting and summarizing the information/data on key collaborations.	1
ST:B05	Identify exemplary efforts and initiatives around transition (state, Intermediate School Districts, Local Educational Agencies).	1
ST:B06	Coordinate stakeholder input to the Transition Network Team to accommodate the need for ongoing state level work in transition.	1
ST:B07	Develop information age communications loops to collect progress data and report summaries back to the field (e.g. periodic, ongoing, storytelling on best practice and state level collaborations about transition issues).	2

Cluster C: Supporting Stakeholders in Transition

The system adjustments envisioned by the Design for Results participants call for a variety of supports for students, parents, educators, agency staff, and others, adapted to the learning requirements of each. For example, students need enhanced skills in self-advocacy. Teachers need more time for their own learning in the area of transition. Administrators need to understand and support the objectives for change. Stories of processes and tools that led to successful adjustments and outcomes in one district need to be publicized in ways that promote learning in other districts. This will require communication strategies that are efficient and effective.

Supporting Stakeholders in Transition Strategic Directives

- Provide a variety of supports to students, parents, educators, and agency representatives to integrate and implement all meaningful student-focused planning processes (e.g. EDP and IEP) at all grade levels (Strategic Directive 8).
- Provide family-friendly transition discussions and supports with families as a way to ensure their understanding of the issues and increase their confidence with their role as partners (Strategic Directive 14).
- Ensure that students at every level know how to self-advocate to ensure the transition process is truly student-focused planning (Strategic Directive 23).
- Standardize the process for the equitable selection, training, and funding of accommodations including assistive and access technologies (Strategic Directive 28).
- Maintain a clearinghouse of transition resources accessible to all stakeholders including disability-specific accommodation options (Strategic Directive 48).
- Find ways to assist special education teachers to have available time to participate in transition (Strategic Directive 57).
- Ensure staff development occurs annually for local school staffs on the transition process and on ways to develop students with self-advocacy skills beginning at the elementary level (Strategic Directive 62).

Activities to Implement Strategic Directives

Activity Number	Activity	Year
ST:C01	Incorporate in the 2004-2005 budget plan, initiatives that support further development of the clearinghouse of transition resources including self-advocacy curricula.	1
ST:C02	Gather knowledge and materials developed by the Transition Services Project and post on existing Transition Web site.	1
ST:C03	Compile baseline data by ISD regarding parents' and students' experiences with transition.	1
ST:C04	Conduct statewide IEP review process that contributes to continuous improvement of Secondary Transition.	1
ST:C05	Implement Parent Support and Education grant, utilizing its IEP focus with support to parents as effective partners in planning and implementing effective programs and services for students.	1
ST:C06	Review and revise, if necessary, the transition coordinator qualification rule.	1
ST:C07	Use Transition flow-through funding for Transition Coordinators to support ongoing training and technical assistance for teachers.	1
ST:C08	Enhance communication among transition stakeholders about assistive technology resources available through Michigan's Assistive Technology Resource.	2
ST:C09	Design an abbreviated Design for Results process to enable local districts to engage in continuous improvement planning.	2
ST:C10	State Transition team and Parent Support grantee will collaborate with each other and Center for Educational Networking to support all transition stakeholders.	2
ST:C11	Fund targeted technical assistance to facilitate increasing time teachers have available to participate in transition related activities.	3
ST:C12	Fund a coordinated, intensive initiative to support meaningful, effective student-focused Individualized Education Programs.	3

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